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CIA/RR CB 60-20

Copy No.______ 30 March 1960

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CURRENT SUPPORT BRIEF

USSR SEEKS STRATEGIC SYNTHETIC PLANTS

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

This report represents the immediate views of the originating intelligence components of the Office of Research and Reports. Comments are solicited.

W-A-R-N-I-N-G

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USSR SEEKS STRATEGIC SYNTHETIC PLANTS

The USSR is currently negotiating with American and Japanese firms for the purchase of plants, including know-how, for the production of polyester film, which has important applications in the field of electrical insulation. $\underline{1}/$

This film has a wide range of industrial and military uses. It is used in capacitors, motor generators, and transformers. Wire and cable manufactured with this synthetic film is used in various types of equipment, including telephone, radar, atomic energy apparatus, radio, television, and a variety of electronic items of miniature and subminiature manufacture. The importance of miniature electrical components and of reliability of instruments made with the synthetic film is well illustrated in the development work of the various types of long-range missiles. Equally important work with radar, sonar, and automatic tracking equipment is also dependent on reliable components manufactured with synthetic insulation.

Synthetic film having certain specifications for use as insulation is embargoed by the Free World for shipment to the Bloc although know-how and equipment to produce the film is not specifically embargoed. 2/ Probably the major portion of the output of the plants falls within the specifications of the embargoed film. The specifications of the film to be produced in these plants correspond to those for Mylar, which is manufactured in the United States.

In addition to industrial applications, Mylar is used in the United States in the instrumentation cable made for the Titan ICBM project to provide for a long, reliable service. The film is also used to make magnetic recording tapes for light-weight airborne recorders, and has been used in the United States for high-altitude photography film.

Mylar has a lower electrical leakage, lesser sensitivity to humidity, and higher temperature resistivity, than standard insulating materials. End-products made with Mylar are more compact than those made with standard insulating materials. Age has little effect on the electrical properties of the film, a feature important in such equipment as missile controls.

Because of its properties, Mylar is replacing other insulating materials in the manufacture of capacitors, which play a vital role in electronic carrier equipment, providing many communications circuits needed for strategic warning stations such as the DEW line and Texas Towers. A recent development fostered by the miniaturization trend is the use of metallized Mylar in capacitors which are less than a fourth the weight and size of standard components.

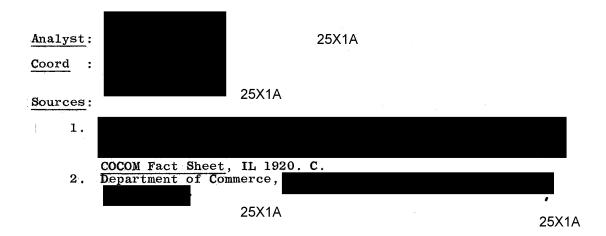
The USSR lags behind the Free World in the production of plastic insulating materials having optimum temperature and electrical properties over a wide performance range. Recurrent efforts to overcome these problems constitute a part of the general effort of the USSR to expand and improve its capabilities to produce electronic components specially adapted for uses in advanced military electronic systems. The procurement of these polyester film plants would contribute significantly to this goal, providing an annual capacity of close to 8 million pounds of polyester film—about 45 percent of current United States production.

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12 April 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Publications Staff, ORR

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FROM

SUBJECT

Release of Information for ORR CB 60-20,

USSR Seeks Strategic Synthetic Plants

REFERENCE

Memo dated 7 April 1960 from C/St/P/ORR

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The information taken from (Source #1 of reference Current Support Brief) has been cleared for release in finished form

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Attachment A/s

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12 April 1960

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UESR Seeks Strategic Synthetic Plants

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Attachments:

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